

22 March 1962

**MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD**

**SUBJECT:** Minutes of Special Group Meeting, 22 March 1962

**PRESENT:** Mr. Bundy; Mr. Johnson; Mr. Gilpatric and General Parker; Mr. McCone

The Attorney General was present for Item 1; Ambassador Reinhardt and Mr. Karamessines, of CIA, were present for Item 3.

**1. Situation in North Vietnam**

25X1 [redacted] of CIA, gave a summary of the increased logistic capability in North Vietnam.

**2. British Coup**

This item was discussed briefly. Mr. McCone was asked to prepare an assessment of the chances of success of various proposed covert lines of action. It was recognized that this kind of study must be distinct from the SNEK now in progress.

**3. Italy**

25X1 A draft memorandum for higher authority, covering the covert program of support, was discussed. Mr. Johnson agreed to go along with the Ambassador's and CIA's recommendations on the [redacted]

[redacted] It was noted that other racers of the program had already been agreed among State, CIA and the Ambassador.

Mr. Reinhardt was to discuss the proposals with higher authority later in the afternoon.

**4. Reconnaissance Activities**

The Group then turned to discussion of: the State Department's paper recommending relaxation of certain restrictive policies with respect to space activities; a draft Defense directive, which reinforced previously-discussed security measures; and a paper from CIA on the extent of Soviet knowledge of U.S. reconnaissance capabilities.

NSC review(s) completed.

- 2 -

Mr. Johnson emphasized that the State position was not that the U.S. should now acknowledge its clandestine activities in this field, but rather that we should find some way slowly to surface what we are doing. He cautioned against being so clandestine that we appear to have a guilt complex.

Mr. Bundy suggested that perhaps the best way to proceed would be to explore possibilities of setting the stage for eventual acceptance of this kind of use for outer space, through the medium of international lawyers, scholars or similar individuals. He emphasized that this had nothing to do with any consideration of our present capabilities or activities. Along these lines, it was agreed that the State Department should take the lead in having its international legal experts work up the case for obtaining such acceptance, without exposing these experts in any way to currently-classified information.

Mr. Gilpatrick said that the Defense paper had as its objective the maintenance of security discipline within the Defense establishment.

Mr. McCone undertook to look further into the Zhukov article entitled "Space Espionage Plans and International Law," which was cited in the CIA paper, with a view to seeing how the Soviets themselves have approached this problem.

25X1  
5.  - Political Action

25X1  
This project was deferred in view of its possible impact on the  base situation.

25X1  
6. Labor Program -

This was approved as presented. Mr. Bundy undertook to report this fact to higher authority.

25X1  
7.  - Political Action

The election project was approved as presented. Mr. Bundy undertook to discuss it with higher authority.

8. Support to Political Parties

25X1  
It was noted that State and CIA are in agreement on all aspects of the program for  to political parties, as

- 3 -

summarized in the paper recently prepared by CIA. It was agreed that Mr. McCone and Mr. Johnson should discuss this at an appropriate time with higher authority.

9. Peripheral Flights

Mr. McCone said that the five peripheral flights in the Soviet Far East, proposed by DOD and discussed at last week's meeting, had been further considered by CIA experts. They had concluded that the information that could be expected from these missions would not be sufficient to justify alerting Soviet defenses. Mr. Gilpatrick agreed to require the responsible officers to justify these proposals further.

Thomas A. Parrott

**Distribution**

Mr. Johnson  
Mr. Gilpatrick  
Mr. McCone  
Mr. Bundy